

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SCHEDULING BROADCAST INFORMATION

Cross Reference to Co-Pending Applications

5 This application is related to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/293,594
filed April 16, 1999, entitled "A Broadband Data Broadcast Service", U.S. Patent
Application Serial No. 09/709,005, filed Nov. 8, 2000, entitled "Error Correction
with Limited Working Store", U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/571,791 filed
May 16, 2000, entitled "Maintaining Information Variety in an Information
10 Receiving System", which are all assigned to the assignee of the present invention and
are all incorporated herein by reference.

Background of the Invention

15 The present invention relates to mechanisms for scheduling broadcast
information, and more particularly, to mechanisms for maintaining variety and/or
timeliness of the information in a scheduled broadcast stream.

Information systems allow a wide variety of information to be transmitted to
individual consumers of information. A typical information system includes an
information transmitter and one or more information receiver systems. The
information receiver systems receive the information transmitted by the information
20 transmitter, and provide the information to the consumer. Such an information system
may be based on over-the-air transmissions, satellite transmissions, wire-based
transmissions including cable, fiber-optic transmissions, or any other type of
information transmission medium.

For most systems, there is a large amount of information that is available for
25 broadcast. The information may take the form of news stories, entertainment
programming, software, etc. Each of these general categories of information often
have multiple sub-categories. For example, news stories may have local, national and
international sub-categories, each covering a wide variety of topical categories such as
sports, business, recreation, etc. Each topical category may have further sub-
30 categories. For example, the sports topical category may have sub-categories of
baseball, football, soccer, hockey, etc. As can be seen, there can be a wide variety of
information that is available for broadcast.

Compounding the amount of information that is available for broadcast is the